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1. (four times amended) A peptide forming a linear epitope for a human autoantibody selected from the group of peptides of less than forty amino acids, wherein the sequence of the epitope begins with the amino acid numbered from the amino terminus followed by the listed amino acid sequence consisting of

918
the Ro/SSA epitopes: 30, MNRLHRFL (SEQ ID NO:37), 37, LCFGSEGGT (SEQ ID NO:38), 38, CFGSEGGT (amino acids 2-9 of SEQ ID NO:38), 41, SEGGTYIYKEQ (SEQ ID NO:39), 42, EGGTYIYKEQ (amino acids 2-11 of SEQ ID NO:39), 44, GTYYIYKEQ (amino acids 4-11 of SEQ ID NO:39), 44, GTYYI (amino acids 4-8 of SEQ ID NO:39), 76, EIKSFSQEGRT (SEQ ID NO:40), 78, KSFSQEGR (amino acids 3-10 of SEQ ID NO:40), 81, SQEGRTTKQ (SEQ ID NO:41), 84, GRTTKQEPM (SEQ ID NO:42), 106, STKQAAFKAV (amino acids 2-11 of SEQ ID NO:43), 105, ISTKQAAFKAVS (SEQ ID NO:43), 108, KQAAFKAV (amino acids 4-11 of SEQ ID NO:43), 111, AFKAVSEVC (SEQ ID NO:44), 126, FTFIQFKKDLKESMK (SEQ ID NO:45), 130, QFKKDLKE (amino acids 5-12 of SEQ ID NO:45), 138, SMKCGMWGRA (SEQ ID NO:46), 139, MKCGMWGRA (amino acids 2-10 of SEQ ID NO:46), 142, GMWGRALRKAIA (SEQ ID NO:47), 145, GRALRKAI (amino acids 4-11 of SEQ ID NO:47), 165, ALAVTKYKQRNGWSHKDLLRLSH (SEQ ID NO:48), 169, TKYKQRNG (amino acids 5-12 of SEQ ID NO:48), 173, QRNGWSHK (amino acids 9-16 of SEQ ID NO:48), 182, LLRLSHLKPS (SEQ ID NO:49), 184, RLSHLKPS (amino acids 3-10 of

U.S. SERIAL NO: 07/867, 819
FILED: April 13, 1992
AMENDMENT

SEQ ID NO:49), 199, TKYITKGW (amino acids 3-10 of SEQ ID NO:71), 202, ITKGWKEV
(amino acids 6-13 of SEQ ID NO:71), 210, HELYKEKA (SEQ ID NO:50), 212, LYKEKALSV
(SEQ ID NO:51), 216, KALSVETEKLLKYL (SEQ ID NO:52), 222, TEKLLKYL (amino acids
7-14 of SEQ ID NO:52), 224, KLLKYLEA (SEQ ID NO:53), 229, LEAVEKVKRTKDE (SEQ
ID NO:54), 234, KVKRTKDE (amino acids 6-13 of SEQ ID NO:54), 257,
HLLTNHLKSKEVWKALLQEMPL (SEQ ID NO:55), 263, LKSKEVWK (amino acids 7-14 of
SEQ ID NO:55), 264, KSKEVWKA (amino acids 8-15 of SEQ ID NO:55), 265, SKEVWK
(amino acids 9-14 of SEQ ID NO:55), 280, ALLRNLGKMTA (SEQ ID NO:56), 283,
RNLGKMT (amino acids 4-10 of SEQ ID NO:56), 285, LGKMTANS (SEQ ID NO:57), 308,
LCNEKLLKKARIHPFHI (SEQ ID NO:58), 313, LLKKARI (amino acids 6-12 of SEQ ID
NO:58), 315, KKARIHPF (amino acids 8-15 of SEQ ID NO:58), 330,
TYKTGHGLRGKLGKWRPDE (SEQ ID NO:59), 331, YKTGHGL (amino acids 2-8 of SEQ ID
NO:59), 352, ALDAAFYK (SEQ ID NO:60), 355, AAFYKTFKTVEPTGKRFLLA (SEQ ID
NO:61), 379, ASMNQRLVLS (SEQ ID NO:62), 365, EPTGKRFL (amino acids 11-18 of SEQ
ID NO:61), 398, AMCMVVTR (SEQ ID NO:63), 414, AFSDEMVP (SEQ ID NO:64), 420,
VPCPVTTD (SEQ ID NO:65), 433, VLMAMSQI (SEQ ID NO:66), 445, TDCSLPMI (SEQ ID
NO:67), 449, LPMIWAQKTNTTPA (amino acids 3-15 of SEQ ID NO:68), 472, TFAGGVHPAI
(SEQ ID NO:69), 472, TFAGGVHP (amino acids 1-8 of SEQ ID NO:69), 481,
IALREYRKKMDIPAKL (SEQ ID NO:70), 484, REYRKKMD (amino acids 4-11 of SEQ ID

NO:70).

2. (twice amended) A peptide of claim 1 consisting of between four and twenty five amino acids.

3. (twice amended) A peptide of claim 2 reactive with anti-Ro/SSA polyclonal antibodies.

4. (twice amended) A peptide of claim 2 reactive with anti-SM B/B' polyclonal antibodies.

5. (twice amended) A peptide of claim 2 reactive with anti-La/SSB polyclonal antibodies.

10. (twice amended) A peptide of claim 1 labelled with a compound selected from the group consisting of dyes, fluorescent labels, chemiluminescent labels, enzymes, and radioactive labels.

11. (twice amended) A peptide of claim 1 immobilized onto a substrate.

12. (five times amended) A method for screening patients for autoantibodies to Ro/SSA comprising reacting a biological sample with a peptide forming a linear epitope selected from the group of peptides of less than forty amino acids, beginning with the amino acid numbered from the amino terminus followed by the listed amino acid sequence consisting of the Ro/SSA epitopes: 30, MNRLHRFL (SEQ ID NO:37), 37, LCFGSEGGT (SEQ ID NO:38), 38, CFGSEGGT (amino acids 2-9 of SEQ ID NO:38), 41, SEGGTYIIEQ

U.S. SERIAL NO: 07/867, 819

FILED: April 13, 1992

AMENDMENT

29
(SEQ ID NO:39), 42, EGGTYYYKEQ (amino acids 2-11 of SEQ ID NO:39), 44, GTYYIKEQ
(amino acids 4-11 of SEQ ID NO:39), 44, GTYYI (amino acids 4-8 of SEQ ID NO:39), 76,
EIKSFSQEGRT (SEQ ID NO:40), 78, KSFSQEGR (amino acids 3-10 of SEQ ID NO:40), 81,
SQEGRTTKQ (SEQ ID NO:41), 84, GRTTKQEPM (SEQ ID NO:42), 106, STKQAAFKAV
(amino acids 2-11 of SEQ ID NO:43), 105, ISTKQAAFKAVS (SEQ ID NO:43), 108,
KQAAFKAV (amino acids 4-11 of SEQ ID NO:43), 111, AFKAVSEVC (SEQ ID NO:44), 126,
FTFIQFKKDLKESMK (SEQ ID NO:45), 130, QFKKDLKE (amino acids 5-12 of SEQ ID
NO:45), 138, SMKCGMWGRA (SEQ ID NO:46), 139, MKCGMWGRA (amino acids 2-10 of
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(amino acids 6-13 of SEQ ID NO:71), 210, HELYKEKA (SEQ ID NO:50), 212, LYKEKALSV
(SEQ ID NO:51), 216, KALSVETEKLLKYL (SEQ ID NO:52), 222, TEKLLKYL (amino acids
7-14 of SEQ ID NO:52), 224, KLLKYLEA (SEQ ID NO:53), 229, LEAVEKVKRTKDE (SEQ
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U.S. SERIAL NO: 07/867, 819
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(amino acids 9-14 of SEQ ID NO:55), 280 ALLRNLGKMTA (SEQ ID NO:56), 283, RNLGKMT (amino acids 4-10 of SEQ ID NO:56), 285, LGKMTANS (SEQ ID NO:57), 308, LCNEKLLKKARIHPFHI (SEQ ID NO:58), 313, LLKKARI (amino acids 6-12 of SEQ ID NO:58), 315, KKARIHPF (amino acids 8-15 of SEQ ID NO:58), 330, TYKTGHGLRGKLGKWRPDE (SEQ ID NO:59), 331, YKTGHGL (amino acids 2-8 of SEQ ID NO:59), 352, ALDAAFYK (SEQ ID NO:60), 355, AAFYKTFKTVEPTGKRFLLA (SEQ ID NO:61), 379, ASMNQRLVLS (SEQ ID NO:62), 365, EPTGKRFL (amino acids 11-18 of SEQ ID NO:61), 398, AMCMVVTR (SEQ ID NO:63), 414, AFSDEMVP (SEQ ID NO:64), 420, VPCPVTTD (SEQ ID NO:65), 433, VLMAMSI (SEQ ID NO:66), 445, TDCSLPMI (SEQ ID NO:67), 449, LPMIWAQKTNTPA (amino acids 3-15 of SEQ ID NO:68), 472, TFAGGVHPAI (SEQ ID NO:69), 472, TFAGGVHP (amino acids 1-8 of SEQ ID NO:69), 481, IALREYRKKMDIPAKL (SEQ ID NO:70), 484, REYRKKMD (amino acids 4-11 of SEQ ID NO:70).

13. (twice amended) The method of claim 12 wherein the peptide is labelled with a compound selected from the group consisting of dyes, fluorescent labels, chemiluminescent labels, enzymes, and radioactive labels.

14. The method of claim 12 wherein the peptides are immobilized onto a substrate.

15. (amended) The method of claim 14 further comprising detecting

U.S. SERIAL NO: 07/867, 819
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AMENDMENT

29 autoantibodies in a patient sample by reacting the patient sample with the immobilized peptides.

16. (twice amended) The method of claim 15 further comprising predicting the prognosis of the patient based on the reactivity of the patient sample with different peptides.
